



KELLY'S CRIME CORNER

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'TIS THE SEASON - CAMPAIGN SEASON!

The campaign season is in full swing. Everywhere you look, you see signs promoting a candidate, proposition, or measure. While you may not agree with the signs you see posted throughout the city, they are just an example of citizens exercising their First Amendment right - the right to free speech.

There are several municipal codes that govern the placement of campaign signs. Below are a few of the regulations that govern where you can post signs, how long you can post signs, and who is responsible for the signs. To see the entire section, you can refer to Costa Mesa Municipal code section 13-323 - Political Campaign Signs, and section 13-323.5 - Portable Signs within Public Right-of-way. The Municipal Code can be found online at www.costamesaca.gov.

CAMPAIGN SIGN LAWS

- Any person, party, or group posting political campaign signs must file a statement with the City Clerk designating the person or entity responsible for posting the signs and liable for the estimated actual cost of removal of the signs to ensure compliance with the law
- All signs shall be removed not later than ten (10) days following the date of the election
- No sign shall be lighted, either internally or externally
- No sign shall be placed in a manner that obstructs visibility to pedestrian or vehicular traffic
- Signs may only be placed in the public right-of-way between 6 a.m. on Friday to 6 p.m. on Sunday of any week period, and may not be within 15 feet of a driveway or fire hydrant, and may not be placed in the center median
- No sign shall be affixed to traffic control devices, government signs, light standards, utility poles, bus shelters, or other structures, posts, fences, shrubs or trees.

AND DON'T FORGET - IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO TAMPER WITH, VANDALIZE, OR STEAL CAMPAIGN SIGNS! IF YOU SEE THIS OCCURRING, PLEASE REPORT THIS CRIME!



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS - OR OPENS?

In the past two months, there have been almost 80 residential burglaries in the city of Costa Mesa. In over 40 of those crimes of opportunity, the burglar gained entry via an open/unlocked door or window. These numbers include garage burglaries - 10 during this period through an open/unlocked door. These cases tend to escalate during hot weather - we all hate to come home to a hot house, and many of us do not have central air and rely on the "ocean breeze" to cool down our houses.

Please lock all your doors and windows before leaving your home, even for just a minute. Here are a few more tips to keep your home safe!

- Never leave a house key available: under a doormat, in a flower pot, on the ledge of a door. These are the first places a burglar will look

- Exterior doors should have dead bolt locks with a 1 inch strong metal bar extending into the door frame
- Sliding doors and windows should all have "ventilation" locks as well as auxiliary locks to bolster security
- Be sure to include good locks for garage, patio or other doors that lead out through storage areas or a spare room
- Whenever you move to a new home, have the locks changed
- Be a good neighbor! Help the Police Department by being the "eyes and ears" in your neighborhood and report any suspicious activity!

ONLINE CRIME REPORTING

Did you know you can now file a police report online? The Costa Mesa Police Department has an online citizen police report system that allows you to report several different types of crimes online. You may report the following incidents online:

- Annoying/Harassing Phone Calls
- Identity Theft/Fraud
- Hit and Run
- Lost Property
- Non-Injury Traffic Accident
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Theft from Vehicle (unlocked vehicle only)

- It is NOT an emergency
- The incident occurred within Costa Mesa
- There is NO suspect information
- It did not occur on a state freeway
- You have a return email address so you may be contacted

You can find detailed instructions on how to file an online crime report at www.costamesapd.org. Just click on the link for Online Crime Reporting!



Online reporting is a nice alternative for citizens that are unable to wait for a police officer to respond, or are unable to go to the front desk of the police department to file a report. There are a few requirements needed to be able to file a report online. They are: